

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace paragraph [0068] with the following:

-- FIG. 2 illustrates the path by which a broadband access network interconnects an end-subscriber to the Internet. A communications device 200 can connect with a broadband access network by means of a customer premises transport device, such as a modem 210. Such a modem 210 can function to receive digital transmissions from the communications device 210, and modulate them into the carrier wave used to transmit information over the broadband access network's wires, and demodulate incoming carrier wave signals into digital data transmissions. That modem 210 can connect, over the access provider's wires or radio spectrum to the access network's central facilities described above, at which point another modem termination device may either modulate/demodulate signals or forward them to the next hop in the network. That modem termination device interconnects with at least one aggregation switch 230 that communicates with a plurality of subscriber premises, and in turn interconnects with an IP router 240. That IP router 240 is able to direct packets to their various destinations within the access provider's network or in a wide area or public network such as the Internet 250, and receive packets from the Internet for routing throughout the broadband access network.--

Please replace paragraph [0107] with the following:

--The client node 1120 runs a client application allowing the subscriber to choose a music selection for download from the server node 1110. This application can be a properly equipped web browser, media player, or another client application that is open

to carrying content from multiple providers or dedicated to bringing service only from that online music service. The subscriber at client node 1120 interactively selects a music download selection and the server node 1110 readies the music download for preferred transport by conforming to the agreed application signature and inserting a content tag. The content tag identifies the application, the content class and type, and the preferred transport service (for example: exclude from byte caps). The content tag is authenticated using any at least unidirectional authentication technique (such as a CRC computation) and optionally a secret number shared between the serving entity and the cable operator. Once the content is readied, it is transmitted over the network comprised of cable modem [[1130]] 1131, termination system [[1140]] 1141, Internet access router [[1140]] 1171, the Internet 1160, Internet access router 1170 where it is received by the preferred transporter 1180. Upon receiving the content payload with its signature and content tag, the preferred transport 1180 inspects the content tag and computes the authenticated value inside the tag using (in this example) the CRC and shared secret. Once successful, the preferred transporter 1180 sets up a switching flow table to provide the preferred transport service of high bandwidth and exclusion from counting any downloaded bytes toward the operator byte caps. The preferred transporter can also enforce general access network policies – such as the policy that this type of preferred transport only applies to the download music flows. The preferred transporter 1180 switches the music download flows with preferred transport for the duration of the music download between the client node 1120 and the server node 1110.--

Please replace paragraph [109] with the following:

-- FIG. ~~[[10]]~~ **16** illustrates divergent content transmission and authentication pathways. Before sending, or according preferred service, for a flow of broadband content, a preferred transporter 1010 might authenticate a content transmission request at a separate authentication node 1020. Having a separate authentication node associated with a specific content tag could allow content originators to control the exact consumption and transport distribution of every individual content item regardless of how it is distributed over a broadband network. In cases where content can be distributed outside the control of the content originator, content tags authenticated at the access provider network can in this way regain control of the distribution under the authority of the originating content provider. This provides a hybrid model of allowing wide distribution of content while maintaining the content originator's control of how the content is delivered over the transport. A key business benefit enabled by the use of content tags at the access provider network is that it enables the access provider to collect market demographics and content class/type usage, activity, and distribution information that can guide the access provider to structure content offerings or select content partners.--